

## **ALBERTA ROMANCE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION POLICIES**

Ratified April 22, 1993

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### **FRAMEWORK**

#### **BELIEF STATEMENT** (Why do we exist?)

ARWA believes its members benefit through association with fellow writers.

#### **VISION STATEMENT** (What are we striving for?)

ARWA exists to promote excellence in the craft of writing fiction, help its members become published authors, and help its members establish careers in writing fiction.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT** (How do we achieve our vision?)

ARWA shall strive to educate and inform both published and unpublished writers by providing a forum for members to obtain and disseminate information about writing techniques, publishing, marketing and networking with other writers.

#### **TARGET STATEMENT** (Who benefits?)

ARWA will provide information and a safe, supportive community to all its members, both published and unpublished.

#### **AIM STATEMENT** (What guiding principles direct us toward the future?)

ARWA will provide regular programs, workshops and conferences to its members.

ARWA will utilize the expertise of in-house members as well as calling upon speakers from outside the Association to help inform and educate its members on the craft of writing, with emphasis on writing romantic fiction.

ARWA will encourage the active participation of all its members.

ARWA will utilize various media to enhance communication and education amongst its members.

ARWA will maintain financial stability

ARWA will know its services are making a difference by the number of members who reach their writing goals.

## MEMBERSHIP

### 1. FULL MEMBERSHIP

- 1.01. Full membership in the ARWA requires the submission of 45 pages of manuscript, which may include a complete synopsis of up to 15 pages. Submissions for full memberships must be certified by the Membership Chair. Full membership will begin at the next regular meeting after the manuscript submission has been received. Submission requirements shall be waived for authors published in romance or mainstream fiction; however, proof of publication may be required.
- 1.02. If a manuscript submission is made by a writing team, all members of the team will be considered full members. Each member of a writing team will be required to pay appropriate membership dues.
- 1.03. Manuscripts submitted for membership requirements will not be judged in any way but will be used only to assess the needs and program requirements of new members. Membership submissions shall be returned to the member following acceptance of full membership either at an ensuing meeting or by mail.
- 1.04. Full membership will also be extended to those who attend and fulfill the writing requirements of designated courses offered by ARWA.
- 1.05. Full members are accorded voting rights as defined in section 7.01 of the ARWA Bylaws and may hold elected positions providing they meet the requirements set down in section 3.01 of the Bylaws.

### 2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

- 2.01. Associate membership in the ARWA requires payment of appropriate membership fees. An associate member may enjoy the benefits of belonging to ARWA but will not have voting privileges or be eligible to serve as an Elected Officer.

### 3. NEW MEMBERSHIP

- 3.01. New members will only be accepted in ARWA from September 1 to October 31 of each year. This membership window will NOT apply to a new member who is already published in romance or mainstream fiction, or who is a member in good standing of any other comparable romance writing association. In case of a transfer member, however, the manuscript requirement will still be in effect to qualify for full membership.
- 3.02. The membership window also does not apply to former members of ARWA who have allowed their membership to lapse. Previous members, either full or associate may rejoin at any time by paying the full membership fee for their appropriate category. Any outstanding debts to the organization must be cleared before a member may rejoin. Previous full members need not resubmit the manuscript requirement.
- 3.03. Extraordinary membership status will be dealt with on an individual basis by the Board of Directors as specific situations arise. Eg: Temporary membership for members of other writing organizations who are in Calgary for limited periods of time.
- 3.04. Limited membership will be allowed for those who wish to join at times other than the membership window and will be a one time only option. Limited membership will expire at the next membership intake. Limited membership privileges will include attendance at regular meetings and workshops, receipt of the newsletter and temporary access to the membership area of the website, but will not include special events or special programs. At the discretion of the Board, limited members may be entitled to a pro-rated fee for special events.

#### 4. **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

- 4.01. Membership fees shall be ratified annually at the annual general meeting.
- 4.02. An associate member who meets full membership requirements during the year, after paying associate member fees, will not be refunded the difference in fees.
- 4.03. Current fee for full membership in ARWA is \$50.00.
- 4.04. Current fee for associate membership is \$60.00.
- 4.05. Current fees for limited membership are \$7.00 for each month from the date of the limited membership to the end of June and shall be payable in full upon joining.

#### 5. **MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING**

- 5.01. To further define the requirements set out in section 3.01 of the ARWA Bylaws, the membership date of a member in good standing will be considered to be the date that the member joined the ARWA either as a full member or as an associate member, providing s/he has maintained continuous membership. In the case of a lapsed member, the date the member rejoins shall be considered the membership date.
- 5.02. To be considered a member in good standing, membership fees must be paid in full for the current year. Only members in good standing shall qualify for membership rates for ARWA events.

#### 6. **SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS**

- 6.01. The following acts shall constitute violations of ARWA standards of conduct and shall be deemed grounds for suspension of membership:
  - a) Committing an act of plagiarism.
  - b) Misrepresenting membership qualifications.
  - c) Failing to pay, following receipt of written demand, any financial obligations due the ARWA.
  - d) Persistent verbal or physical conduct of an offensive nature which disrupts any ARWA meeting or function, or which disturbs the peace of another member or her/his family.
  - e) Committing libel or slander against another member.
  - f) Misuse or unauthorized use of corporate property.
- 6.02. A member accused of violating the ARWA standards of conduct shall be notified in writing thirty (30) days prior to a meeting of the Board of Directors called to consider the violation.
- 6.03. The notice shall include:
  - a) A statement of the date, time, and place of the meeting of the Board of Directors called to consider the violation.
  - b) A reference to the particular violation.
  - c) A short and plain statement of the available facts.
  - d) An opportunity to respond and present evidence on all issues involved.
- 6.04. The Board of Directors shall consider the facts and evidence presented at the meeting and shall render a decision, which shall be presented to the membership for ratification at a General meeting as stated in Section 2.07.1 of the ARWA Bylaws.
- 6.05. Voting on member suspension shall be by closed ballot.

## 7. **MEMBERSHIP YEAR**

- 7.01. The membership year runs from September 1 to August 31. Membership fees are due on September 1 of each year and must be received by October 31 of the same year or membership will be considered lapsed and privileges will be suspended.

## 8. **MEMBERSHIP LIST**

- 8.01. A complete and current membership list shall be maintained by the Membership chair and shall be made available to all Board members as changes occur.
- 8.02. An updated membership list shall be distributed twice a year. This list shall be for member use only.
- 8.03. The ARWA membership list is confidential and may not be used for solicitation, commercial use, or any other unauthorized purposes

## **GENERAL OPERATIONS**

## 9. **POLICIES**

- 9.01. All policies will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors. Any changes or additions will be ratified by the voting members at a General Meeting.
- 9.02. Each new Board of Directors shall be expected to familiarize themselves with the existing Policies of the organization at the first meeting of that Board.
- 9.03. A Five-Year Plan shall be drafted by the Board of Directors. The Plan will be reviewed annually and tabled at the AGM.

## 10. **OFFICE**

- 10.01. Office access and door codes shall be limited to the Board of Directors.
- 10.02. Office keys shall be issued at the discretion of the Board with distribution the responsibility of the President.
- 10.03. The Common Room key shall be issued only to the President, or designate, who shall be responsible for opening the room for meetings and workshops, meeting set-up, dismantlement, and securing of premises.
- 10.04. Mail shall be picked up at least weekly by the President, Secretary and/or an assigned Director. Only those assigned shall be issued a key to the mailbox.
- 10.05. One set of spare keys shall be kept in the office for emergency access by designated Board members.

## 11. **RECORDS**

- 11.01. Minutes of all meetings will be maintained by the Secretary and will be made available to any full member upon request.
- 11.02. An attendance record of meetings and workshops will be maintained and kept by the Secretary.
- 11.03. The Archivist shall ensure that historical records of the ARWA are maintained and appropriately stored.

- 11.04. The archives shall be deemed to consist of the minutes all meetings, attendance records, membership records, newsletters, records and advertising of special events (conferences, seminars etc.), milestones of the association and its members, material generated for the organization (promotional material, workshop tapes, booklets, pamphlets etc.), photographic records and any other material considered part of the history of ARWA.
- 11.05. Membership records shall be maintained by the Membership Chair and shall consist of a list of members and their addresses, including all changes; membership dates and numbers, including date of joining and/or date of full membership.
- 11.06. All members of the Board of Directors shall maintain records relating to their position. These records shall be passed to the position's successor at the end of each term.

## 12. **BOARD POSITIONS**

- 12.01. The Board of Directors shall consist of the Elected Officers as defined by the Bylaws and a minimum of one Director at Large. The Board of Directors shall appoint additional Directors at Large as necessary.
- 12.02. Board positions shall be voted on in person or by absentee ballot. Nominations from the floor shall be taken only when there is no candidate for a position.
- 12.03. Directors At Large or Executive officers shall be appointed as Membership and Program Chairs.
- 12.04. In addition to the Board positions, organizational positions may be established by the Board of Directors as necessary. Organizational positions shall include, but not be limited to, Librarian, Archivist, Web Manager, Newsletter editor, Newsletter designer, and Volunteer Coordinator. Organizational positions shall be for a minimum term of one year but shall have no maximum requirement. Any member in good standing, including associate members, shall be eligible to hold organizational positions. Certain positions may be required to attend the Board of Directors meetings upon request.
- 12.05. Descriptions of the duties of each Board and Organizational position shall be included in a Procedural Manual and shall be reviewed annually by the Board. It is the responsibility of each position holder to apprise her/himself of the duties of her/his position and to ensure that those duties are carried out during the term of office.
- 12.06. Any person nominated for the position of President must have actively served on the ARWA Board of Directors in any capacity for a minimum of one year prior to becoming President.
- 12.07. The Past President shall serve as an ad hoc member of the Board for six (6) months of the following term and may not hold the position of Vice President or President for a period of two (2) years following his or her term as President.
- 12.08. The position of Secretary requires 100% attendance at scheduled Board meetings and regular General meetings. If the Secretary is unable to attend, the Secretary shall designate a substitute to carry out the duties of the position.
- 12.09. The position of Librarian requires 100% attendance at regular General meetings. If the Librarian is unable to attend any given General meeting, the Librarian shall designate a substitute to carry out the duties of the position.

## 13. **GRIEVANCES**

- 13.01. All complaints or concerns must be submitted to the Board in writing or in person and will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- 13.02. Anonymous or third party complaints that cannot be substantiated will not be recognized or addressed.

#### 14. **REPRESENTATION**

- 14.01. Only persons with approval of the Board may present themselves as representatives of ARWA in any business capacity.
- 14.02. Only the President and the Treasurer shall be authorized to sign contracts.
- 14.03. Affiliation or reciprocal agreements with other writing organizations may be undertaken at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

#### 15. **MEETINGS**

- 15.01. The agenda of the monthly meetings shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson. Board members shall contact the Secretary or Chairperson with any items they wish included on the agenda no later than ten (10) days before the scheduled Board meeting. The Secretary shall send out the agenda to all Board members no later than seven (7) days before the scheduled meeting. Board members shall inform the Chairperson of any additions or changes to the agenda before the start of the meeting.
- 15.02. Any member may have items scheduled on the agenda of Board or General meetings by contacting the Secretary or the President.
- 15.03. Board meetings shall be held at the discretion of the Board in compliance with Section 6.04.1 of the ARWA Bylaws.
- 15.04. Any member may attend meetings of the Board of Directors with the exception of In Camera Sessions.
- 15.05. Any discussion of sensitive material shall be held In Camera and shall be considered confidential. Any issue discussed In Camera shall not be recorded in the minutes and shall not be discussed outside the session. Breaching of the confidentiality of an In Camera session shall be grounds for expulsion from the Board of Directors.
- 15.06. In Camera sessions shall be used for discussion items only. All motions or actions undertaken by the Board shall be made in open session and recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting.
- 15.07. General meetings of the ARWA shall be closed to outside attendance; however, prospective members may attend one meeting on a complimentary basis. Other visiting privileges shall be at the discretion of the Board.
- 15.08. Members of the Board of Directors are required to attend all Board meetings scheduled and seventy-five percent (75%) of all regular General meetings. Any member of the Board of Directors who misses three (3) consecutive Board meetings, without reasonable cause, shall be subject to expulsion from the Board.

### **FINANCIAL**

#### 16. **FISCAL POLICIES**

- 16.01. The fiscal year of the Association shall be from June 1 to May 31.
- 16.02. An audited financial statement shall be presented to the membership at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.
- 16.03. A fee of \$5.00 plus the amount of bank NSF fees shall be charged for NSF cheques.
- 16.04. At the discretion of the Board, membership and/or conference/workshop fees may be paid by advanced installment.

- 16.05. Events for which a fee is charged shall have a minimum refund policy of no refunds for cancellations received within seven days prior to the event. Additional refund policies may be required for specific events and shall be set by the Event Coordinator and/or Committee and approved by the Board. Refunds for special circumstances shall be at the discretion of the Board.

#### 17. SPENDING

- 17.01. The President may authorize the expenditure of monies up to \$100.00. Such expenditure must be reported at the next Board meeting for formal authorization by the Board.
- 17.02. The Treasurer and President at their discretion may maintain a petty cash float of up to \$100.00.
- 17.03. An ongoing expenditure, once approved by Board, need not be reapproved for each expenditure providing that the originally approved parameters do not change. Eg: newsletter or secretarial expenses.

#### 18. ALLOCATIONS

- 18.01. To insure a secure financial base for future projects, the Association shall set aside any monies over and above the annual operating budget. These monies will be deemed to be special project capital. At the discretion of the Board, special project capital may be divided into long and short term project funds and invested at the best available market rates. The maximum for long term investments will be no more than eighteen months. The maximum for short term investments will be no more than three months.
- 18.02. For expenditure of monies in the special project fund, a project with accompanying budget must be approved at a General meeting by the voting members. All special projects offered by ARWA should be structured not to run at a deficit unless a special motion is passed by the voting members at a General meeting.
- 18.03. The outgoing Board shall present a proposed operating budget at the AGM. An incoming Board of Directors may adjust the operating budget, provided that the new operating budget is presented to the membership at the next General Meeting.

#### 19. INVENTORY

- 19.01. Assets of the Association shall be inventoried annually before the yearly audit.

#### 20. VOTING

- 20.01. Proxies with verifiable signatures will be accepted by mail or fax.

#### 21. NEWSLETTER

- 21.01. The purpose of the newsletter is to disseminate information on the craft of writing and to provide market updates. It shall remain politically neutral. A newsletter Editor/Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors.
- 21.02. No material published in the ARWA newsletter will infringe on existing copyright laws.
- 21.03. No material published in the ARWA newsletter may be copied or reprinted without the permission of the author of the material.
- 21.04. All material from outside sources not specifically solicited must have written permission from the author.
- 21.05. The newsletter will publish a minimum of 5 issues per year.

- 21.06. Yearly subscriptions to the newsletter shall be from September to September. Mid-year subscriptions shall be prorated at \$2.00 per issue or back issues provided, whichever is more expedient. Back issues shall be available at \$2.00 per issue.
- 21.07. The ARWA may exchange complimentary newsletters with other organizations or individuals at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- 21.08. Advertising in the newsletter is restricted to writing related support services and must be approved by the Board. Fees and layout of advertising shall be at the discretion of the Board.
- 21.09. Any other ARWA publication must be approved by the Board and established as self-supporting. All monies for such publications must go through the ARWA Treasury.

## 22. **PROGRAM**

- 22.01. The Board of Directors shall set a Program Committee at the first Board Meeting of the year. The Program Chair shall report to the Board of Directors on the activities of the Program Committee and obtain Board Approval before the program can be implemented. Any changes to the program shall be reported to the Board of Directors to ensure that there is a record of the change and to receive final approval from the Board of Directors.
- 22.02. The program committee shall endeavor to address all levels of membership interests/needs in developing programs.
- 22.03. Any workshop that requires expenditures shall be presented to the Board of Directors in the form of a written proposal, outlining intent and applicable costs. The final decision regarding expenditures and fees rests with the Board of Directors.
- 22.04. In the case of a decision that requires immediate approval, the Program Chair may obtain a Board majority by telephone/fax/e-mail. The results of the majority shall be kept and the action ratified and entered into the Minutes of the next Board Meeting.
- 22.05. The program schedule shall be made available to the newsletter editor and the website manager on a regular basis, and the upcoming program schedule shall be published in each issue of the newsletter and on the ARWA web site.
- 22.06. Designated Saturday workshops may be open to the general public provided the membership is given priority. Fees for Saturday workshops will be set at the discretion of the Board.
- 22.07. Booking of speakers external to ARWA shall be confirmed in writing. The Program Chair shall also provide notification to all internal speakers at least one month in advance of the program.
- 22.08. External speakers with a specific expertise may be paid an honorarium which shall be determined on an individual basis by the Board of Directors.
- 22.09. The President shall be responsible for booking meeting space for all meetings and programs.

## 23. **LIBRARY**

- 23.01. All library material must be signed out. The borrowing limit shall be set at the discretion of the Librarian.
- 23.02. Loan period for library materials is one month. A fine of \$1.00 per week per item will be levied for overdue materials. At his/her discretion, the Librarian may waive fines due to extenuating circumstances provided arrangements are made prior to the due date.
- 23.03. Members with library materials that are more than one month overdue shall be advised by telephone/email. If materials are not returned within a specific allotted time, second notice shall be by mail.
- 23.04. If library materials are not returned within three months, the borrower will be required to pay a fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) or the replacement cost, whichever is higher.

- 23.05. If library fines are not paid, library privileges will be suspended until owed monies are paid.
- 23.06. Membership cannot be renewed until outstanding library fines have been paid.
- 23.07. Revenue from fines will be designated for library purchases.

#### 24. **WEB SITE**

- 24.01. ARWA shall maintain a web site for dissemination of information regarding the organization.
- 24.02. The web site shall be maintained by a member in good standing who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors.

#### 25. **PRIVACY POLICY**

- 25.01. The privacy of ARWA members is important to ARWA. ARWA shall protect any personal information provided by its members and shall limit the use, disclosure and retention of personal information to that which is necessary for the organization's purposes. Upon joining, members of ARWA shall be made aware of the Membership and Privacy Policies of the organization and shall sign a consent form accepting the Policies and Bylaws governing use of personal information as a term of membership.
- 25.02. Membership information collected by ARWA shall be used to disseminate information regarding ARWA events and programs and in delivery of the newsletter. ARWA will not sell, trade, share, loan or otherwise provide any personal information gathered as a result of membership in ARWA to any parties outside the organization except where required by law.
- 25.03. ARWA shall strive to maintain accurate and updated membership records, but it shall be the responsibility of the individual member to apprise the Membership Chair of any changes or corrections in personal information. Updates shall be made in writing, by email or fax as soon as such changes are in effect.
- 25.04. The Board of Directors shall have access to the full member information for the purposes stated above in Policies 25.01 and 25.02. Requests to withdraw consent for use, disclosure and retention of personal information shall be made in writing to the Board of Directors and may require proof of identity. Withdrawal of consent may result in restricted membership benefits.
- 25.05. Since networking is one of the primary purposes of ARWA, a membership list with name, address, phone and email is distributed to members twice yearly as per Policies 8.01 through 8.03. Exclusive of information required by Bylaw 2.05, a member may request the exclusion of specific information from this distribution list. Such requests shall be made to the Membership chair in writing, by email or fax.
- 25.06. Member information gathered by ARWA shall remain as part of the archival records of the organization when a membership lapses. ARWA shall maintain use of this information for a minimum of one year in order to disseminate informational updates to former members. An individual may be removed from the contact list upon written request to the Board of Directors. A former member wishing to remain on ARWA's contact list may update any personal information, and such information shall be bound by the Privacy Policies of the organization.
- 25.07. Personal information provided to ARWA by an individual who is not a member of ARWA but who attends an ARWA sponsored event shall be governed by the same policies as that of members.
- 25.08. ARWA recognizes the responsibility for personal information under its control. At the first board meeting after each election, the Board of Directors shall appoint an elected Board member to act as a Privacy Officer. The Privacy Officer shall oversee and insure the compliance of ARWA's Privacy Policies.
- 25.09. Any member with questions or concerns about any aspect of use of private information may contact the Privacy Officer in person or in writing. The Privacy Officer may seek external advice before responding to any questions.